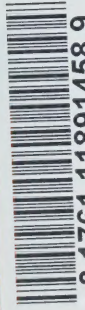


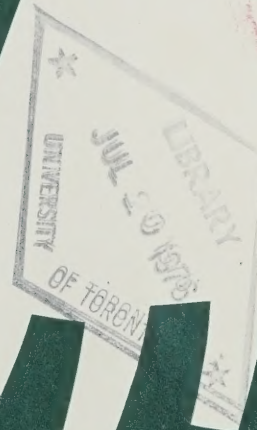
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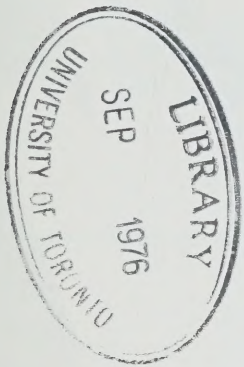
The Ontario Educational
Communications Authority



Introduction

In 1972, a prototype program to teach early elementary school children about the value of seat belts was developed and experimentally evaluated by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications. Groups of 75 to 100 children, from Grade 2 and 3 classes, attended an hour-long session on seat belts. They were given brochures to take home

and were asked to tell their parents about the program. The project demonstrated a significant increase in the use of seat belts *by the parents* of the children exposed to the program. Because of the success of this project, it was decided to design a comprehensive School Seat Belt Program for Grade 2 and 3 children in Ontario.



Program Objectives

- To increase awareness among elementary school children of how seat belts prevent injury and death in traffic accidents.
- To teach children how to wear seat belts properly.
- To create in children a positive attitude toward wearing seat belts.
- To increase seat belt use among these children.
- To encourage the children to initiate discussion about seat belts with their parents, at home and in the car.

Program Components

- A fifteen-minute animated film will be available in mid-October. A mock-up of the film has been produced in the form of a slide show, which will be used to replace the film until it is available, and which then may be used for review purposes in the classroom.
- Classroom activities through which the themes of the film can be expanded and reinforced.
- Take-home materials for the children.
- Follow-up package to be administered independently by the teachers.

The program will include information on the "human collision," the value of seat belts, the proper use and adjustment of seat belts and several "identification" figures who always wear seat belts. The in-class portion of the program, approximately 45 minutes in length, is novel and exciting for the children. Large posters and a car seat help achieve this effect.

Development of Program Materials

The Ontario Educational Communications Authority was contracted to produce the film for the program and also to develop and design the post-viewing materials. All materials, particularly the film, were comprehensively pre-tested as they were being developed, and the entire program is being pilot tested. A small amount of background research has been conducted to determine the extent to which Grade 2 and 3 children are aware of seat belts, and to estimate the amount and type of information that this age group has already acquired about seat belts.

The results of this research indicate that children in Grades 2 and 3 are aware of seat belts. Small group discussions were conducted and in every case, with no prompting from the discussion leader, seat belts were mentioned as an important part of the car. One of the major objections the children had to wearing

seat belts, that they hurt because they are tight, would seem to be related to the finding that almost all the children believed that the lap belt should be worn across the stomach.

When probed about their experience as passengers, many children complained about bumping their heads as a result of sudden stops or bumpy roads. A surprising number reported that they, or someone they knew, had fallen out of a moving car.

Three pilot projects are being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the school program. Each evaluation involves treated schools, in which Grade 2 and 3 children will receive the program and an equal number of untreated or control schools which will not receive the program during the pilot.

The effect of the program on children will be measured through in-depth, personal interviews before, during and after

the program. Indirect effects on their parents will be measured by means of plaza surveys (observation of belt use) and telephone surveys (attitudinal and knowledge changes). In each pilot area, these measures for parents of treated children will be compared with those for parents of untreated children. Feedback from those who deliver the program, as well as from teachers and parents, will also be sought.

Follow-up Activities

We intend to leave a follow-up package with each teacher, who will be encouraged to continue the seat belt program with the class. An outline of suggested activities and available materials will be given to the teachers.

Materials will also be made available through the Ministry of Education on a continuing basis. It is also hoped that the safety officers will briefly review seat belt information on their second visit to each school.

In this way, those children initially exposed to the program will receive further exposure to seat belt information throughout the school year. In addition, it will be possible to reach different grades in both elementary and secondary schools with the appropriate levels of seat belt information. It is hoped that the School Seat Belt Program will be utilized and expanded over the next few years by teachers and safety education personnel alike.



Guideline for Program Implementation

The Film "Citizen Seat Belt"

Citizen Seat Belt is an animated film produced for use in your classroom presentations on seat belt safety to elementary school children. Recent research has shown that elementary school children, especially those in Grades 2 and 3, are very responsive to animation. The animated approach used so often in the world of TV commercials and advertising, has been extremely successful in its influence over

children. Animation provides a captivating environment in which to present important information without overshadowing it. It was decided, therefore, to use animation as a vehicle to promote seat belt safety.

The message of the film is direct and positive: Wear your seat belt properly, whenever you are in a car. It's the best protection you have.

Film Objectives

- To create a positive attitude toward wearing seat belts.
- To give information on the location and correct use of seat belts.
- To give information on how seat belts can prevent serious injuries in car accidents.
- To instil an awareness that seat belts are the best protection in a car and that they should be worn, however bothersome or uncomfortable.
- To reinforce the fact that since many accidents happen close to home, seat belts should be worn at all times, even on short journeys.
- To persuade children so effectively that seat belts should be worn, that they, in turn, will persuade family and friends to do so.
- To present all the above in an entertaining and positive way.



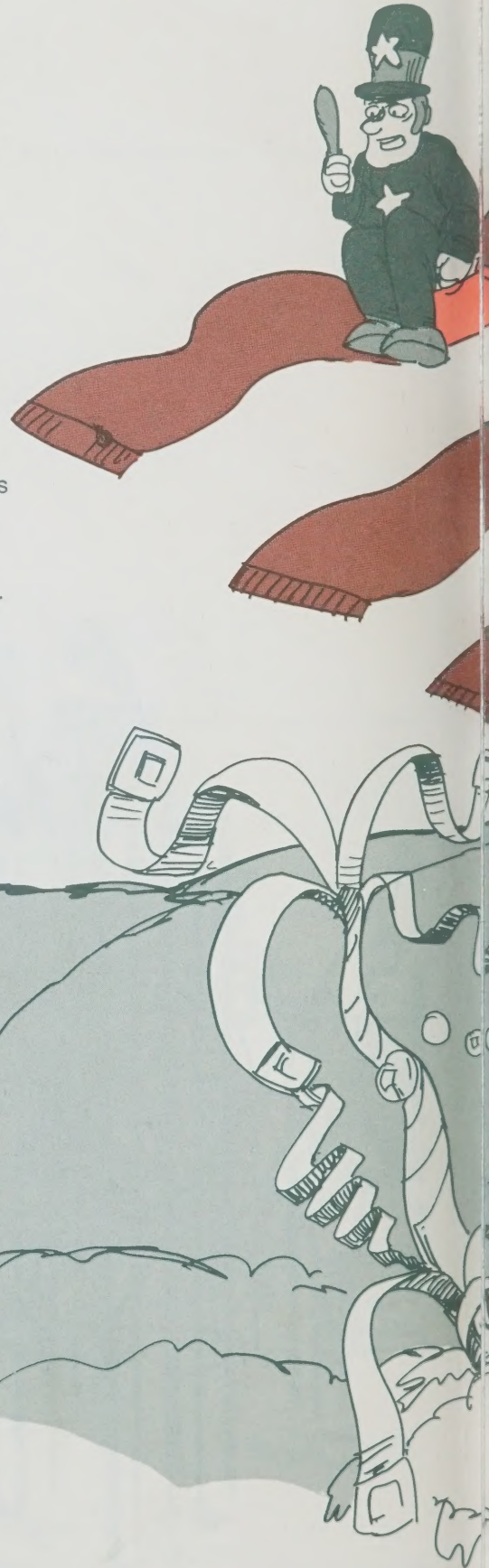
Synopsis of the Film

Two children, John and Corry, are playing with a toy go-cart. John wishes desperately for a real car, whereupon the Fairy Carfather appears, produces a real car and promises them a ride. Corry is concerned that the car lacks something; but the Fairy Carfather is rather happy-go-lucky in nature, and car safety is not one of his top priorities. Suddenly, he has to stop abruptly for a stray cat and goes flying through the window. Corry realizes that it is the seat belts that are missing. Undeterred, the Fairy Carfather produces seat belts for John and Corry, but refuses to buckle up himself since, with his windows rolled up, he feels quite safe. Another sudden stop throws his head against the car roof. Ungraciously he agrees to put on a seat belt. However, he gets in such a muddle that the location and positioning of belts has to be explained to him.

In a dream fantasy, the Fairy Carfather finds himself in Seat Belt Safety Land. He is apprehended by the Seat Belt Safety Patrol, who proceed to give him lessons in seat belt safety. He soon learns that (1) you never know what will happen, so always buckle up; (2) it's important to buckle up correctly; (3) since accidents happen anywhere, even near home, always wear your seat belt.

The Fairy Carfather, shaken by his experiences, is finally convinced that the most important thing to do when getting into a car is to put on a seat belt. (At this point, the correct placement of belts is reinforced.)

At four o'clock, the Fairy Carfather realizes he must return his car. The children refuse to unbuckle their belts and get out until they've had a ride. Consequently, at the appointed time, the car "disappears," and everything becomes invisible, except for the occupants and their seat belts. A traffic officer, impressed by their use of seat belts, presents them with an award of merit. The program ends with John and Corry driving off with their parents, admonishing their father to wear his seat belt. The Fairy Carfather has the last word: Remember to tell everyone how important it is to wear seat belts.





Using the Film

Suggested Introduction to the Film

- Introduce yourself.
- Question the students:
Q. How did I come to your school today?
A. By a police cruiser.
Q. What do you think is special about my cruiser?
A. Siren, red light, etc.
Q. But there's something very special in every police car that I wouldn't be without, which you have in your cars, too. What is it?
A. Seat belts.

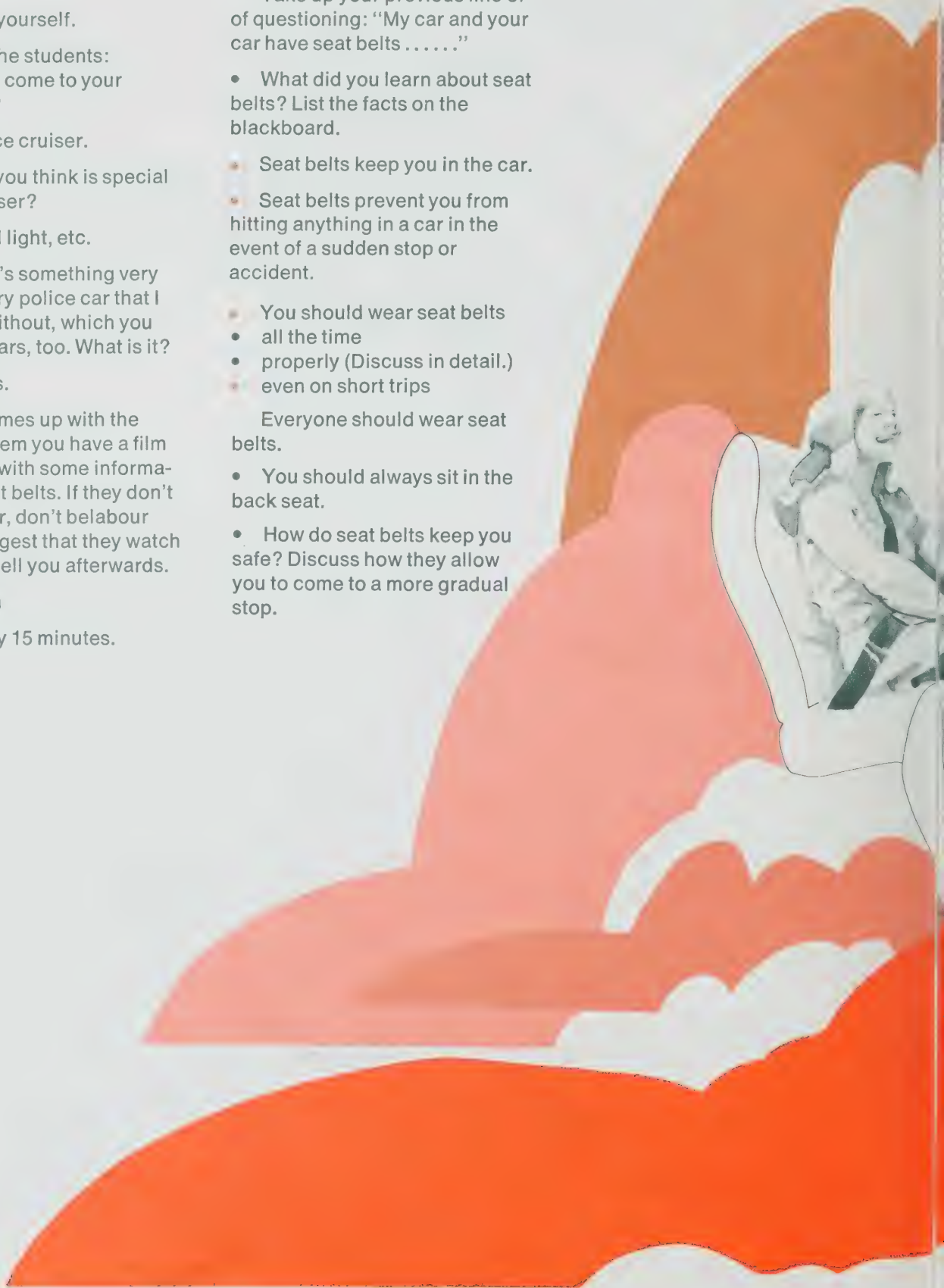
If the class comes up with the answer, tell them you have a film to show them with some information about seat belts. If they don't get the answer, don't belabour the point. Suggest that they watch your film and tell you afterwards.

Show the Film

Approximately 15 minutes.

After the Film

- Take up your previous line of questioning: "My car and your car have seat belts"
- What did you learn about seat belts? List the facts on the blackboard.
 - Seat belts keep you in the car.
 - Seat belts prevent you from hitting anything in a car in the event of a sudden stop or accident.
 - You should wear seat belts
 - all the time
 - properly (Discuss in detail.)
 - even on short trips
- Everyone should wear seat belts.
 - You should always sit in the back seat.
 - How do seat belts keep you safe? Discuss how they allow you to come to a more gradual stop.





• Relate some of the film fantasy to real situations:

- The Fairy Carfather flew through the car window into a Jungle Jim. What might happen in real life?
- The Fairy Carfather thought rolling the car windows up would keep him safe. Did it? What might happen in real life?
- The Fairy Carfather fell off the window-cleaning platform because he wasn't wearing his belt properly. What could happen if your belt is wrongly placed? (Stomach injuries.)
- What accident happened near the Fairy Carfather's home? What kind of accident is more likely to happen near your home?
- The Fairy Carfather thought his car had everything it needed. What safety features does a real car have?
- The Fairy Carfather was bumped around inside the car during its flight through the field. How many of you hit your heads against the car when you go over bumps in the road?

- Ask how many students wear seat belts. Always? Sometimes? Never? How many parents wear seat belts? Always? Sometimes? Never? Record the answers on the board and discuss them.

- Ask the students if their parents have ever told them why they do/do not wear seat belts. Discuss some of the counter-arguments:

"We're not going far and, in any case, I'm a careful driver":

- Most accidents occur close to home.
- Even at slow speeds you can be hurt if the car has to stop suddenly or is in an accident.
- Not everyone is a careful driver. Someone else may cause an accident, and you won't be able to avoid being involved in it.
- There is also the possibility that something in the car will fail, causing an accident.

"In an accident, I'd rather be thrown clear":

- Seat belts keep you in the car and in your seat.
- It is much safer to remain inside the car than to be thrown out; you can be seriously hurt if you hit something hard outside the car.

"I won't be able to get out quickly if the car catches fire or goes into water":

- Seat belts are easy to unfasten in the case of an emergency such as the car catching fire or going into water.

- They will help you remain conscious and prevent you from being badly hurt, so that you can quickly get out of the car if you have to.

"Seat belts are inconvenient and uncomfortable":

- Although many seat belts are a nuisance to put on or uncomfortable to wear, most people get used to them if they wear them a lot.

- Besides, the extra protection is worth the effort it takes to put on seat belts.

- Ask if any students have younger brothers or sisters who ride on their mother's lap in the front seat of the car. Point out the dangers of this.

- Use the car seat. Let all students practise, in the car seat, the correct way to buckle and unbuckle seat belts.





• Hand out materials from the Seat Belt Safety Kit. This kit contains:

- Three posters for the classroom, each with a message.

"Remember your seat belt." A picture of the Fairy Carfather saying, "Good thing I remembered my seat belt, eh?"

"Everyone should wear belts." A real-life situation showing a child and a racing driver, buckling up.

"Buckle up correctly." Cartoon children are buckling up, the right way and the wrong way.

You might like to show these posters at appropriate places in the discussion after the film.

- Class set of buttons depicting the Fairy Carfather
- Class set of bumper or car stickers inscribed "Be a Seat Belt Citizen."
- Class set of the student activity book. This should be the final handout. Suggest that the students do the puzzles and tasks

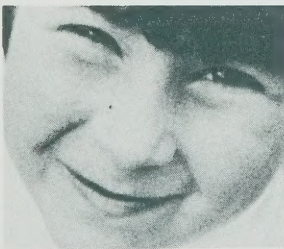
and that they bring the results to their teachers. You could work through one puzzle with them.

- A teacher's manual.
- A copy of *The Human Collision*, to be left with the teacher.

Summarize Did you enjoy it? What did we learn today? What are you going to tell your parents about it?

Note: The above suggestions are a pattern only. You will no doubt find a line of questioning which best suits you and your way of presenting *Citizen Seat Belt*. However, the suggestions do include all the information that should be discussed with the students.





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